

VZCZCXYZ0074
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAB #1183 3320951
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 280951Z NOV 07
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3777
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 001183

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [IV](#)
SUBJECT: PARTIES HAMMERING OUT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTIONS

Classified By: Pol/Econ Chief Silvia Eiriz for
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Political parties participated in a forum November 13-14 during which they finalized the language on a code of conduct for elections. The text calls upon signatories to take steps to ensure democratic, free, open and transparent elections. Ruling FPI party leaders declined to sign the agreement, noting that the Independent Electoral Commission had too much power and that the code does not explicitly and exclusively refer to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Representatives from more than 20 political parties met November 13-14 at a forum on elections hosted by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) Electoral Division, and Cote d'Ivoire's Independent Electoral Commission (CEI). The parties finalized the language of a long-awaited code of conduct for political parties, groups, political forces, and candidates for the upcoming elections. Political parties, through the mediation of CEI and NDI, have been negotiating the language of the code of conduct since September. Nearly all parties initialed the final text November 14 with the notable exception of the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), President Gbagbo's party. There are, however, efforts underway to convince the FPI to sign on to the code.

¶3. (SBU) The code of conduct calls upon all signatories:
-- to support democratic, free, open and transparent elections organized by the CEI;
-- to accept poll results and only use judicial procedures provided for by law to challenge, if necessary, the results of the elections;
-- to allow voters to exercise their right to vote and move freely and without intimidation;
-- to reject and take action to prohibit supporters from engaging in any form of violence, intimidation, infringement of civil liberties of candidates, party workers, supporters, voters and journalists;
-- to prohibit the use of state resources for election campaigning or political propaganda at political rallies;
-- to refrain from using race, ethnic origin, gender, religion or personal life as a tool for campaigning;
-- to use dialogue or other peaceful means to resolve dispute;
-- to refrain from financing militias, self-defense or paramilitary groups or to manipulate the armed forces;
-- to refrain from announcing election results before the official CEI proclamation.

In addition signatories agree to take to the CEI any problems linked to the electoral process and any breach of the code of conduct. The CEI will then mediate and issue a call to order or an official warning.

¶4. (C) The FPI delegation left while the final language was being negotiated and did not initial the text. NDI Country

Rep Sidi Diawara told Poloff that the head of the FPI delegation later told him that FPI President Pascal Affi N'Guessan ordered the delegation to leave and not sign because the FPI had some objections to the text. The preamble of the code of conduct refers to "political agreements between Ivorian actors and the international resolutions geared towards resolving the Ivorian crisis." The head of the FPI delegation said the FPI believes the code of conduct should refer to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement (OPA) exclusively and explicitly and not to any of the other peace agreements. The FPI also expressed concern that the CEI will oversee political parties' adherence to the code of conduct, arguing that the CEI, which is opposition-led, has too much power. The FPI would prefer that the FPI-led National Organization for Identification (ONI) have oversight.

15. (C) Diawara told the Ambassador November 28 that Affi N'Guessan expressed reservations about the provision in the code of conduct prohibiting announcement of election results before the official CEI proclamation. He also said that Affi N'Guessan thought the code of conduct would be more significant if it were signed by the heads of political parties, rather than the more junior-level staff who attended the forum. According to Diawara, the CEI is trying to persuade all party leaders to sign on to the code in a public ceremony. (Comment: Signing the code of conduct is a step in the right direction, and adherence to its principles would send a powerful signal to the international community and Cote d'Ivoire's beleaguered citizens. It could harbor well for acceptance of the outcome of the elections. End Comment.)
NESBITT